

March 4, 1952

Honorable Frank L. Chelf  
Chairman, Special Subcommittee of the  
House Judiciary Committee  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Congressman Chelf:

This acknowledges your letter of February 22, 1952, in which, as Chairman of the Special Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary, you requested of the Attorney General the following information for the purpose of conducting an inquiry into the administration of the Department of Justice:

A list of all cases referred to the Department of Justice or U. S. Attorneys for either criminal or civil action by any governmental department or agency within the last six years, prior to the date of this communication, in which:

- a. Action was declined by the Department of Justice, including in each such case the reason or reasons assigned by said Department for such refusal to act.
- b. Said cases were returned by the Department of Justice to the governmental Department or agency concerned for further information or investigation. In such cases, a statement of all subsequent action taken by the Department of Justice should be included.
- c. Said cases have been referred to the Department of Justice and have been pending in the Department for a period of more than one year and are not included in b. above.

The enabling resolution constituting your Subcommittee limits the scope of its inquiry "to specific allegations and complaints based upon credible evidence as determined by the Subcommittee and not based on mere suspicion and rumor to the end that the investigation shall be non-political and non-discursive in nature."

We respectfully suggest that your request of February 22, 1952, is

DOJ review(s) completed.

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outside the scope of the resolution which established the Special Subcommittee, since it does not seek information based upon specific complaints, supported by credible evidence.

In addition, your request would impose an intolerable burden upon this Department. It would require an examination of approximately 500,000 cases. During the course of such examination the Department's efforts to discharge its current duties would be effectively paralyzed, and, in any event, we could not comply with any such request.

The Executive is an independent and equal coordinate branch under our constitutional system of government. Nevertheless, we are prepared to honor all reasonable requests with respect to definite cases and matters where such requests are based upon specific allegations supported by credible evidence, unless public interest or necessity requires otherwise.

Certain members of your Subcommittee have made public statements to the effect that they have in their possession specific complaints concerning the administration of the Department. If these members have any such information, we shall be glad to cooperate in order to bring the facts to light.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph C. Duggan,  
Assistant Attorney General  
Executive Adjudications Division